

# INTEGRATING PERSONNEL AND PAY SYSTEMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY ARMY

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## Introduction

More than a rollout of new software and the creation of a common database, the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS), which is less than 2 years away, will revolutionize the way the Army conducts business.

The Army will be the first military Service to implement DOD's single, integrated, Web-based military personnel and pay system. The system will provide everyone in the Army with personnel and pay management tools that are more responsive and efficient. The target date for the DIMHRS initial operating capability is the third quarter of 2004.

The World Wide Web has changed the way we shop, conduct research, and talk to one another. Capturing the power of the Web for our new military personnel and pay system will enable us to do things in the Army that few thought possible. Modernizing the Army with a technologically advanced system such as DIMHRS will mean that soldiers and commanders can be free to do the business of soldiering. With DIMHRS, Service members can feel confident that their personnel and finance information is correct and that their families are supported. However, successful implementation will require a great deal of work and

coordination among the Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, as well as all components of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force.

There are many in the Army who remember how the introduction of personal computers changed the world. However, it wasn't until we networked those individual systems that we began to see how technology could really transform our lives. DIMHRS will bring the same dramatic changes to the Army and DOD. Through standardization of data and system interoperability, warfighting commanders will be able to "see" all of their joint assets—Active, National Guard, and Reserve. Commanders will have better personnel planning tools, and soldiers will be able to access their files from anywhere, at anytime, via the Web.

## Software

The promise of DIMHRS is to implement new technologies that will transform and streamline the Army's personnel and pay systems. The greatest challenge to implementation is managing the necessary change within the Army. In the past, we built new systems that fit our current business rules and processes. With DIMHRS' choice of a pure Internet commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software product, PeopleSoft 8, we will have a system that already works. We just need to make sure it will work for us.

## Challenges

For the Army, that challenge is twofold. We must ensure that the DIMHRS functionality can deliver what the Army needs and ensure that the Army community trusts that it will perform every time. The only

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way we can clear those hurdles is to engage the talent of proponent agencies, within all three components, to validate that DIMHRS will deliver the required functionality.

Part of the process will include a shift in the Army's mindset. To adopt a COTS product means changing how the Army thinks about personnel and pay business. Getting the desired result is more important than how business has been done in the past. Using the best practices embedded in the DIMHRS COTS choice, PeopleSoft 8, will help streamline business practices. "There won't be a perfect fit," said COL Kevin Troller, Deputy, Army DIMHRS Office, "but to best capitalize on the benefits of the software, we must adopt business practices, not adapt what we currently do."

DIMHRS will consolidate most of the current legacy system capabilities into one single application that is intuitive and simple to use. The strength of DIMHRS will also transform the human resources community and make it more responsive to the needs of its soldiers and their families.

Desktop access to standard reports and custom query capabilities are additional benefits that DIMHRS provides. Meaningful insights from current, accurate data will support commander decision-making processes at all levels.

Any revolution faces skepticism and a reluctance to change. For DIMHRS to succeed within the given timeframes, members of the Army community must be informed that change is coming. Additionally, soldiers and leaders must understand why change is necessary and, through teamwork, build a commitment for success.

With the selection of PeopleSoft 8 as the commercial software for DIMHRS, we will have a system that is much more efficient and powerful than the hundreds of legacy systems now employed by the four Armed Services. PeopleSoft 8 is an enterprise, Web-based system employed in both private and public organizations. For example, Ford Motor Co.

has implemented PeopleSoft 8, and 97 percent of their functions are self-service via the Web. Additionally, other federal agencies, including the U.S. Coast Guard, have successfully implemented PeopleSoft 8. It works and it works well.

Why should those outside of the personnel and pay community care? Because everything we do as an institutional Army starts with the soldier. We must understand that how we capture and translate facts about soldiers will ultimately affect how we mobilize, outfit, and promote them. The challenge is to make this system work for all DOD military Services.

### Changing Processes

We are currently changing from a multitude of duplicative, labor-intensive processes to a system that knows the rules and guides its users. When the Army integrates personnel and pay systems, soldiers will automatically get the pay raise from a promotion and the adjustment to basic allowance for housing when orders are cut for a permanent change of station. Reserve members and their families will benefit from one personnel and pay system that tracks them regardless of their status. In a multi-Service, multicomponent arena, all Service members deserve the seamless support that integrated processes and systems can provide.

The scale of the changes inherent in implementing DIMHRS is hard to overstate. Hundreds of systems currently employed by the Services will be replaced. Data must be "cleansed

and validated" and then migrated to a common database. Members of all Services must find common ground for personnel and pay actions. An issue-resolution process will address the requirements not fitting into the PeopleSoft 8 functionality. DOD's Joint Requirements and Integration Office is engaged in meeting that challenge.

The Navy is the executive agent for DIMHRS, and the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) is located in New Orleans, LA. The JPMO will work with a soon-to-be-named developer/implementer contractor whose job will entail further analysis of the PeopleSoft 8, designing and building the system, and deploying DIMHRS in the field. Success will hinge on the knowledge and commitment of subject matter experts and the support of the military leadership.

### Conclusion

The establishment of the Army DIMHRS Office and the Army Personnel Transformation Task Force are signs of commitment by the Army's leadership. "A transformed Army must have a human resource system that meets the Army's manning and readiness needs while delivering services necessary for our soldier's well-being," said LTG John M. Le Moyne, the Army's G-1. He added, "DIMHRS will provide the integrated, cross-component, Web-based capabilities that we need to build that system." The Army must commit the necessary resources and talents now to ensure that DIMHRS is successfully implemented on time. It is a call to arms for all of us to deliver on our promise to our soldiers.

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